

Greek Education and Cultural Identity in Greek-Speaking Judaism: The Jewish-Greek Historiographers¹

Introduction

The Greek writing style of Demetrius the Chronographer, who is traditionally situated in the third century B.C.E. and considered the oldest Jewish-Greek author known to us,² is described as “shapeless”³ and “awkward.”⁴ We find even more negative evaluations of the work of Eupolemus, a Jewish historian dated to the second century B.C.E.⁵ His style is said to be “inferior,”⁶ even “miserable,” with “clumsy sentence construction.”⁷ The basis for these harsh criticisms is the presumed use of Hebraistic constructions,⁸ which are generally understood to be caused by bilingual interference. Especially for Eupolemus, Greek is assumed to be his second language.⁹ Scholars often suggest that Demetrius’s and Eupolemus’s lack of literary prowess is the result of a limited Greek-language education,¹⁰ or reflective of a specific dialect. Ben Zion Wacholder even states that “only the presumed

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2 Elias J. Bickerman, “The Jewish Historian Demetrios,” in *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*, vol. 3: *Judaism Before 70* (ed. Jacob Neusner; Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1975), 72–84, revised and reprinted in vol. 2 of *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (2nd ed.; AJEC 68/2; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 618–630, esp. 623; Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. 1: *Historians* (SBLTT 20, Pseudepigrapha 10; Chico, CA: Scholar’s Press, 1983), 52–53; John S. Hanson, “Demetrius the Chronographer (Third Century B.C.): A New Translation and Introduction,” in *OTP*, vol. 2 (1985), 843–854, 844; Sylvie Honigman, “Demetrios (Jewish Historian/Chronographer),” in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (ed. Roger S. Bagnall et al.; Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 2001.

3 Ben Zion Wacholder, *Eupolemus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 3; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College & Jewish Institute of Religion, 1974), 282. Compare also Peter M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), i:693; Holladay, *Historians*, 52; Gregory Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts and Apologetic Historiography* (NTSup 64; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 153.

4 Jacob Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor und die von ihm erhaltenen Reste jüdischer und samaritanischer Geschichtswerke*, Band 1 (Hellenistische Studien 1; Breslau: H. Skutsch, 1874), 37 and 64.

5 John R. Bartlett, *Jews in the Hellenistic World: Josephus, Aristaeus, The Sibylline Oracles, Eupolemus* (Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World 200 BC to 200 AD 1/1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 59; Frank Clancy, “Eupolemus the Chronographer and 141 B.C.E.,” *SJOT* 23 (2009): 274–281; John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (2nd ed.; BRS; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 46–50; Francis T. Fallon, “Eupolemus (Prior to First Century B.C.),” in *OTP*, vol. 2 (1985), 861–872, 863; Lester L. Grabbe, *The Early Hellenistic Period (335–175 B.C.E.)* (Library of Second Temple Studies 68; vol. 2 of *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*; London: T&T Clark, 2008), 86–89; Lester L. Grabbe, “Jewish Identity and Hellenism in the Fragmentary Jewish Writings in Greek,” in *Scripture and Traditions: Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of C. R. Holladay* (ed. Patrick Gray and Gail R. O’Day; NTSup 129; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 21–32, 26–27; Holladay, *Historians*, 95; Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 5–7.

6 Holladay, *Historians*, 95.

7 Felix Jacoby, “Eupolemus (11),” in *PW*, vol. 6/1 (1907), cols. 1227–1229, 1229. Compare also Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor*, 109.

8 Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor*, 64; Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 257.

9 Kenneth Atkinson, “Eupolemus, Historian,” in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, 2571–2572, 2571; Grabbe, *The Early Hellenistic Period*, 87; Grabbe, “Jewish Identity,” 26; Holladay, *Historians*, 95; Søren L. Sørensen, “Identifying the Jewish Eupolemoi: An Onomastic Approach,” *JJS* 66 (2015): 24–35, esp. 26.

10 See Atkinson, “Eupolemus,” 2571; Grabbe, *The Early Hellenistic Period*, 87; Grabbe, “Jewish Identity,” 26; Holladay, *Historians*, 95; Sørensen, “Eupolemoi,” 26; Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 169.

existence of a distinct Judaeo-Greek dialect renders Eupolemus's Greek tolerable.”¹¹

The negative views on the language of Demetrius and Eupolemus are illustrative of a broader issue, namely that of the evaluation of the level of Greek used by Jews in the late Second Temple Period. The style of Jewish writings in Greek has often been dismissed: the Greek of the Septuagint, too, for example, was long seen as substandard. Its character was explained mainly on the basis of either a specific Jewish-Greek dialect or a poor mastery of Greek on the part of the translators.¹² In this way, language usage has been a key element in the discussion on the societal position of Jews in the ancient world: the supposed low-level Greek used by Jews in the Hellenistic world has been linked primarily to their social status as outsiders.

While the hypothesis of a Jewish-Greek dialect can no longer be maintained,¹³ the question remains to what extent Jews in the Hellenistic era would have been able and willing to participate in the Greek education system, and to what extent. This matter relates to our conceptualization of the cultural dynamics between Hellenism and Judaism: it is a question both of the level of integration of Jews in the Greek-speaking world and of the consequences of the use of Greek for Jewish cultural identity.

There has been a move in recent scholarship towards understanding the style of the Septuagint as reflective of post-classical Greek, and appreciating the Septuagint translators as linguistically proficient.¹⁴ This gives rise to the question whether the same could be true for Jewish-Greek writers such as Eupolemus and Demetrius. In this contribution, I reassess

11 Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 257.

12 For an overview of the debate on the nature of Greek used in the Septuagint, see Nicholas De Lange, “Jewish Greek,” in *A History of Ancient Greek: From the Beginnings to Late Antiquity* (ed. Anastasios F. Christidis; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 638-54; Gregory H. R. Horsley, “The Fiction of ‘Jewish Greek,’” in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* (ed. Gregory H. R. Horsley; North Ryde: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, 1989), 5-40; Gregory H. R. Horsley, “‘Christian’ Greek,” in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greek Language and Linguistics*, vol. 1 (ed. Georgios K. Giannakis; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014), 280-283; Stanley E. Porter, “Historical Scholarship on the Language of the Septuagint,” in *Die Sprache der Septuaginta* (ed. Eberhard Bons and Jan Joosten; vol. 3 of *Handbuch zur Septuaginta*; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2016), 15-38.

13 See Gustav Adolf Deissmann, *Bibelstudien: Beiträge, zumeist aus den Papyri und Inschriften, zur Geschichte der Sprache, des Schrifttums und der Religion des hellenistischen Judentums und des Urchristentums* (Marburg: Elwert, 1895); Adolf Deissmann, *Neue bibelstudien: Sprachgeschichtliche beiträge zumeist aus den Papyri und Inschriften* (Marburg: Elwert, 1897) (translated as *Bible Studies: Contributions, Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions, to the History of the Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* [Trans. Alexander Grieve; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901]) and Gustav Adolf Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten: Das Neue Testament und die neuentdeckten Texte der hellenistisch-römischen Welt* (4th ed.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1923; originally published in 1908) (translated as *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World* [Trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910]).

14 See James K. Aitken, *No Stone Unturned: Greek Inscriptions and Septuagint Vocabulary* (CSHB 5; Winona Lake, IN Eisenbrauns, 2014); Trevor V. Evans, *Verbal Syntax in the Greek Pentateuch: Natural Greek Usage and Hebrew Interference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); John A. L. Lee, *A Lexical Study of the Septuagint Version of the Pentateuch* (SCS 14; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983); John A. L. Lee, *The Greek of the Pentateuch: Grinfield Lectures on the Septuagint, 2011–2012* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Demetrius's and Eupolemus's language usage and offer some considerations on their position as Greek-speaking Jewish authors.

The Evidence, I: Features of Post-Classical Greek

We may first reconsider the evidence cited in support of the claim that Demetrius and Eupolemus wrote substandard, Hebraistic Greek.

Jacob Freudenthal, in his seminal work on Alexander Polyhistor, cites two clauses from the same paragraph (*PE* 9.34.2) to illustrate that Eupolemus's style is "incorrect and tasteless": *περὶ δὲ ὧν γράφεις μοι, περὶ τῶν κατὰ τοὺς λαοὺς τοὺς παρ' ἡμῖν* "concerning the matters about which you wrote to me, specifically your request for some of our people" and *ὑπὲρ ὧν ἂν αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσης τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν πάντων* "any question under heaven which you might ask him."¹⁵ While Freudenthal does not make it explicit what the stylistic issue is, these examples seem to pertain to the use of the resumptive pronoun in a relative construction. Wacholder includes this feature and adds the following elements as indicative of Eupolemus's poor style: the use of the verb *ποιέω* (with reference to *PE* 9.34.6 without further comment); the frequent use of the connector *καί* (considered to be reflective of the paratactical style of Hebrew); and the "abused objective" *ὅλος* (that is, used in the same way as the Hebrew uses *לכול*).¹⁶

As evidence of low-level Greek in Demetrius's writings, the author's restricted vocabulary and use of unusual constructions are often mentioned, generally without citation of concrete examples.¹⁷ We can, however, identify elements in his writings similar to those mentioned with regard to Eupolemus's supposed stylistic poverty, such as the use of the resumptive pronoun (e.g., in *PE* 9.21.5). In other words, for both authors, reference is made to a limited number of features that are singled out because they somehow, often intuitively, seem striking to a modern reader. These evaluations, however, rely on modern assumptions about the grammatical and stylistic stability of Greek across time and space.¹⁸ As the fields of classical and biblical studies have gained a more nuanced understanding of the nature of Greek in the post-classical period, we are invited to re-evaluate the evidence and compare it to contemporary literary and non-literary sources.

Let us first look at Eupolemus's use of *ποιέω*. Wacholder describes its use in *PE*

15 Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor*, 109. For a contextualization of Freudenthal's research within the cultural context of the nineteenth century, see Paul M. Kurtz, "Jewish or Jew-ish? The Trouble with Hellenistic Judaism in 19th-Century Germany," *AJS* (forthcoming).

16 Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 256. Compare also Holladay, *Historians*, 100. Many scholars simply cite Freudenthal as a source for the negative evaluation of Eupolemus and Demetrius without considering and assessing the evidence itself.

17 Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor*, 64; Hanson, "Demetrius the Chronographer," 843.

18 Carl Holladay, for example, has explicitly evaluated the language of Eupolemus against the standard of classical Greek authors to conclude that his style was crude. See Holladay, *Historians*, 95.

9.34.6 as an example of “pidgin Greek.”¹⁹ In this passage, the verb is used repeatedly in the context of manufacturing. In Greek, ποιέω can be applied to the construction of anything material, such as buildings, as well as to a smith’s work (LSJ — see, for example, Homer, *Il.* 1.608; 7.222). Eupolemus uses ποιέω precisely in these two contexts. While one may have an opinion about the aesthetic nature of the repetition of ποιέω in this fragment (especially throughout *P.E.* 9.34.6-11), one cannot maintain that its usage in this passage would be indicative of bilingual interference, given that it lies within the standard semantic range of the verb. Holladay mentions another usage of ποιέω that he considers “crude” or “unusual,” namely the construction καλῶς ποιέω + participle, such as at *PE* 9.34.3.²⁰ This construction is, in fact, common in contemporary papyri, as we see in BGU 6 1238 (Arsinoites, third century B.C.E.); BGU 10 1996 (location unknown, 241 B.C.E.); BGU 8 1786 (Herakleopolites, 50 B.C.E.), to mention but a few. These parallels indicate that Eupolemus’s usage of the construction is in no way abnormal.

Secondly, an increased use of parataxis is also typical of post-classical Greek.²¹ While a high frequency of καί can be the result of Semitic interference in translated texts, we cannot conclude that a Greek text in which parataxis is dominant, such as in the cases of Eupolemus and Demetrius, is indicative of Hebrew influence or of limited fluency in the Greek language. Tellingly, we observe that Eupolemus uses the variation that the Greek language offers by alternating between polysyndeton and asyndeton. We can contrast the use of polysyndeton in τὸν τε χρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον καὶ χαλκὸν καὶ λίθον καὶ ξύλα κυπαρίσσινα καὶ κέδρινα “gold and silver and bronze and stone and cypress and cedar wood” (*PE* 9.30.8) to the asyndetic χρυσίον, ἄργύριον, χαλκόν, λίθους, ξύλα κυπαρίσσινα καὶ κέδρινα “gold, silver, bronze, stone, cypress, and cedar wood” (*PE* 9.30.6).

Thirdly, resumptive pronouns are not unusual in Greek either. They already appear in the works of classical authors. Willem Bakker has given an extensive overview of occurrences from Homer through the classical period to Hellenistic Greek.²² The use of this

19 Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 256.

20 Holladay, *Historians*, 95 and 100.

21 See in particular Anneli Aejmelaeus, *Parataxis in the Septuagint: A Study of the Renderings of the Hebrew Coordinate Clauses in the Greek Pentateuch* (AASF, DHL 11; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1982).

22 Willem F. Bakker, *Pronomen Abundans and Pronomen Coniunctum: A Contribution to the History of the Resumptive Pronoun within the Relative Clause in Greek* (Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks 82; Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1974), 16-46; Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Syntax of Septuagint Greek* (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 50; Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen, “The Rendering of the Hebrew Relative Clause in the Greek Pentateuch,” in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, vol. 1 (ed. Avigdor Shinan; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1980), 401-406, repr. in *Studien zur Septuaginta-Syntax*, 55-61; Raija Sollamo, “The Pleonastic Use of the Pronoun in Connection with the Relative Pronoun in the Greek Pentateuch,” in *VII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies. Leuven 1989* (ed. Claude E. Cox; SBLSCS 31; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 75-85; Geoffrey Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers* (2nd ed.; West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 148.

construction, too, seems to increase as time and linguistic development progresses into post-classical Greek. Eupolemus's and Demetrius's use of resumptive pronouns is, therefore, reflective of contemporary language usage.

The use of ὅλος in the sense of πᾶς in the work of Eupolemus can also be explained easily when taking into consideration other Greek writings. ὅλος in the sense of πᾶς occurs mainly in later Greek, particularly in papyri such as P. Oxy. 14 1770 (Oxyrhynchos, third century C.E.) and P. Abinn. 25 l. 15 (Philadelphia, 346 C.E.) as well as in literary sources such as Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 47.482 (fifth century C.E.) and Sophronius of Damascus, *Anthol. Pal.* 7.679.5 (circa 630 C.E.). There are, however, some instances of ὅλος in earlier literature which already suggest this usage of ὅλος, such as Sophocles, *Ajax* 1105 and Menander, *Pk.* 225. The occurrence of this form in Eupolemus's writing, therefore, need not be seen as unnatural Greek. Moreover, Eupolemus varies his word choice to denote "all," as well as the position in which he places the adjective πᾶς. See, for example, ἡ δύναμις μου πᾶσα in *PE* 9.32.1; τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν πάντων in *PE* 9.34.2; παντὸς τοῦ ἱεροῦ in *PE* 9.34.11; τὸ δὲ σύμπαν χρυσίον in *PE* 9.34.16.²³ Eupolemus thus clearly knows different ways to express the same notion.

To summarize, when we re-evaluate the primary evidence, we can conclude that those features that have been cited as evidence for Semitic interference on the part of Demetrius and Eupolemus are, in fact, normal features of post-classical Greek. Comparative linguistic analysis helps us to refrain from "the tendency to equate oddities too readily with bilingual influences."²⁴

The Evidence, II: Features of Educated Greek

Now that we have established that there is no clear evidence for bilingual interference in their writings, we can proceed to attempt to gain insight into the level of Greek Eupolemus and Demetrius used. Was it, in fact, substandard Greek? Since illiteracy was common in antiquity, these authors' ability to read and write indicates that they would, in fact, have participated in a Greek-language education.²⁵ While it is impossible to glean from a text the

23 With regard to the claim that Demetrius's vocabulary was limited, we should keep in mind that the text was transmitted fragmentarily, so that we do not know the full extent of Demetrius's word-stock, and that vocabulary is related to the genre and content of the text.

24 Trevor V. Evans, "Standard Koine Greek in Third Century BC Papyri," in *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth International Congress of Papyrology, Ann Arbor, July 29-August 4, 2007* (ed. Traianos Gagos; American Studies in Papyrology; Ann Arbor, MI: Scholarly Publishing Office, University of Michigan Library, 2010), 197-206, esp. 205.

25 James K. Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," in *On Stone and Scroll: Essays in Honour of Graham Ivor Davies* (ed. James K. Aitken, Katharine J. Dell, and Brian A. Mastin; Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 420; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 507-521, esp. 508-509; James K. Aitken, "The Language of the Septuagint and Jewish-Greek Identity," in *The Jewish-Greek Tradition and the Byzantine Empire* (ed. James K. Aitken and James Carleton Paget; Cambridge: Cambridge

exact level of education a writer may have obtained,²⁶ we are invited to look for indications of some degree of educated Greek usage on the part of our authors.

For the texts under consideration we have to rely on indirect traditions of transmission, in particular the works of Eusebius and Clement of Alexandria,²⁷ who often cite passages preceded by the formula Δημήτριός φησι or Εὐπόλεμός φησι, “Demetrius/Eupolemus says.” For this reason, I have selected language features that do not depend on the sentence construction as indirect speech. This increases the likelihood that the feature under consideration may be attributed to the authors themselves rather than to later editorial activity.²⁸

– In Hebrew, the order of the *nomen regens* and the *nomen rectum* in a construct state is fixed. In Greek, however, there is relative freedom when it comes to the position of the genitive vis-à-vis its governing noun.²⁹ When a translator or writer follows the word order of the Hebrew, the Greek will stereotypically follow the same pattern, namely the governing noun followed by the genitive. When a translator or writer positions the genitive before the governing noun, they make use of a typically Greek linguistic feature.³⁰ We encounter the prepositioning of the genitive a number of times in the works of Demetrius (e.g., τὴν ἑαυτῆς παιδίσκη “her own slave” in *PE* 9.21.3; τῆς Χαναὰν γῆς “the land of Canaan” in *PE* 9.21.8; τοῦ Ἡλιοπόλεως ἱερέως “the priest of Heliopolis” in *PE* 9.21.12) and Eupolemus (e.g., τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ βουλήσει “by the will of God” in *PE* 9.30.2; τὸν τούτου υἱόν “his son” in *PE* 9.30.3; εἰς τὴν Οὐφρῇ νῆσον “to the island of Ofir” in *PE* 9.30.7);

– Variation in the placement of the cardinal number before as well as after the noun is another feature that indicates familiarity with Greek,³¹ since in Hebrew, the cardinal is usually placed before the noun. We see this phenomenon repeatedly in the works of Demetrius (e.g., *PE* 9.21.3: ἐν ἑπτὰ ἔτεσιν “over the course of seven years” versus *PE* 9.21.6:

University Press, 2014), 120-134, esp. 129. On literacy as an indication of educational level, see also Raffaella Cribbiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 160-184; Teresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge Classical Studies; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Dorothy J. Thompson, “Language and Literacy in Early Hellenistic Egypt,” in *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt* (ed. Per Bilde et al.; Studies in Hellenistic Civilization 3; Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992), 39-52.

²⁶ After all, education is only one element that determines an author’s mode of literary production: this is formulated in modern literary theory in the notions of *habitus* and *culture* as a target-oriented phenomenon.

²⁷ The work of Alexander Polyhistor served as the source for Eusebius and possibly also for Clement, cf. Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor*, 3-16.

²⁸ On the citing practices of Eusebius, see Sabrina Inowlocki, *Eusebius and the Jewish Authors: His Citation Technique in an Apologetic Context* (AJEC 64; Leiden: Brill, 2006). See also John Dillery, *Clio’s Other Sons: Berossus and Manetho, with an Afterword on Demetrius* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2015), 381-382.

²⁹ On the position of the genitive in a noun phrase in ancient Greek, see Stéphanie J. Bakker, *The Noun Phrase in Ancient Greek: A Functional Analysis of the Order and Articulation of NP Constituents in Herodotus* (Amsterdam Studies in Classical Philology; Leiden: Brill, 2009); Carlotta Viti, “Genitive Word Order in Ancient Greek: A Functional Analysis of Word Order Freedom in the Noun Phrase,” *Glotta* 84 (2008): 203-238.

³⁰ For this phenomenon in Septuagint translations, see Dhont, *Style and Context*, 99-101.

ἔτη ἕξ “six years”) and Eupolemus (*PE* 9.30.8: ὄντι ἐτῶν ἰβ’ “who was twelve years old” *versus* τῶν δώδεκα φυλάρχων “the twelve rulers”). Regarding the use of numerals, I would also like to draw attention to Demetrius’s use of the dual in μηνῶν δυοῖν “two months” in *PE* 9.21.8 (*bis*). The dual began to disappear even before the post-classical period.³² If this particular usage is not the result of an Atticizing tendency on the part of copyists of Demetrius’s work, it represents an indication of the latter’s educational background;

– Another sign of educated language in post-classical Greek is the use of particles, which became increasingly infrequent.³³ Our authors use a variety of particles, such as τε and τε (...) καί (e.g., for Demetrius, *PE* 9.21.3; 9.29.15; for Eupolemus, *PE* 9.26.1; 9.30.2; 9.30.8), δέ and particularly μέν (...) δέ (e.g., for Demetrius, *PE* 9.21.9; 9.29.15; for Eupolemus, *PE* 9.30.8; 9.32.1), πρῶτον μέν (...) ὕστερον δέ (e.g., Eupolemus, *PE* 9.34.13), γάρ (e.g., Demetrius, *PE* 9.29.16), οὖν (e.g., Demetrius, *PE* 9.29.16), and δή (e.g., Eupolemus, *PE* 9.30.5);

– In classical Greek, a subject in neuter plural will have a verb in the singular. This is the so-called σχῆμα Ἀττικόν.³⁴ In post-classical Greek, we encounter a gradual move towards supplementing a neuter plural subject with a verb in plural. In Eupolemus, we find an example of the σχῆμα Ἀττικόν: ὅπως χορηγῆται τὰ δέοντα “so that their needs will be supplied” (*PE* 9.34.3). This indicates clearly that Eupolemus is educated in Greek beyond the standards of non-literary post-classical Greek;

– Separation of an attribute from its noun, known as hyperbaton, is a typically Greek feature.³⁵ It can be found in Eupolemus, *PE* 9.30.5: ἀξιοῦν τὸν θεὸν τόπον αὐτῷ δεῖξαι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου “he asked God to show him a place for the altar,” where the genitive τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου is separated from its governing noun τόπον.

I could add numerous examples of additional features that signify educated Greek usage,³⁶ but the above should suffice to reframe our perception of Demetrius and Eupolemus as proficient post-classical Greek authors and allow us to move on to the bigger question: How do we understand the style of Demetrius and Eupolemus?

31 See Dhont, *Style and Context*, 97-98.

32 John A. L. Lee, “The Atticist Grammarians,” in *Context, History, and Development*, vol 3 of *The Language of the New Testament* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts; Linguistic Biblical Studies 6; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 283-308, esp. 289; Horrocks, *Greek*, 138; Roberta Melazzo, “The Dual in Ancient Greek,” *Incontri Linguistici* 35 (2012): 49-92.

33 Jerker Blomqvist, *Greek Particles in Hellenistic Prose* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1969), 132-177; Horrocks, *Greek*, 94.

34 See Gillis Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint. I: Book of Job* (Lunds Universitets årsskrift 43/2; Lund: Gleerup, 1946), 6.

35 Daniel Markovic, “Hyperbaton in the Greek Literary Sentence,” *GRBS* 46 (2006) 127-145.

36 A more detailed analysis of the language of Eupolemus specifically can be found in Marieke Dhont, “The Use of Greek in Palestine: Eupolemus as a Case in Point,” *Semitica et Classica* (forthcoming).

Education and Identity in Greek-Speaking Judaism

The above analysis has shown that the language of Demetrius and Eupolemus is at home in a post-classical environment. There is no solid ground for the argument that their language indicates that either of them was bilingual. Their use of the Greek language is not rudimentary. On the contrary, it contains significant subtleties indicative of an educated background. Why, then, have these authors been dismissed by scholarship in the past?

The context in which Eupolemus and Demetrius are to be situated is that of Hellenistic Judaism. The study of Judaism in the Hellenistic period has been significantly influenced by a scholarly paradigm that regards Judaism and Hellenism as monolithic cultures in opposition. The background to this paradigm lies in a philosophy of language dating to the nineteenth century that identifies language, culture, and ethnos.³⁷ In this view, access to Greek-language education for Jews “must have been purchased with the betrayal of Judaism.”³⁸ As a result of this underlying framework of thought, scholarship has not been able clearly to position authors such as Eupolemus and Demetrius. The assumption is that, as Jews, they would not have penetrated the Greek education system to a significant extent and could only have been “Hellenically half-educated,” thus writing in “pidgin Greek.”³⁹ Alternatively, if these authors’ facility with the Greek language was not necessarily considered to be problematic, the view is often expressed that Jewish-Greek authors were writing for apologetic or propagandistic purposes⁴⁰ — in other words, they were writing Greek, not because of an internal Jewish development of expanding literary traditions, but because these works were presumably aimed at the non-Jewish world. This view of a Judaism/Hellenism dichotomy represents an oversimplification of the complex social and cultural interactions between Judaism and the Greek world into polar opposites. Hellenism, defined as the phenomenon of the spread of “Greek” culture, is multifaceted: it can be seen in terms of the Greek language, literature, art, politics, or ideas, for example. “To class all of these as one cultural system is to ignore the differences between them and the likelihood that one person may be in favor of one aspect but not another.”⁴¹

The literary evidence shows us that Jews created a substantial body of Greek-language literature. Eupolemus and Demetrius are part of a wider movement: we have

37 Within biblical studies, this view was criticized most notably by James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Languages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).

38 Shimon Applebaum, Review of Victor Tcherikover, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, in *Tarbiz* 28 (1958-1959) 418-428, translated by and cited in Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 68. Hengel himself says that this statement is “*probably* too sweeping” (emphasis mine).

39 Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 169 and 256 respectively.

40 See, for example, Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition*.

41 Aitken, Review of Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, in *JBL* 123 (2004), 329-341. See also Aaron P. Johnson, “Hellenism and its Discontents,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* (ed. Scott F. Johnson; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 437-466.

at our disposal translations of scripture into Greek (commonly referred to as the Septuagint), as well as numerous compositions, such as deuterocanonical writings, pseudepigrapha, apocrypha, and fragments of several Hellenistic Jewish authors,⁴² which in addition to our historiographers include writers such as Ezekiel the Tragedian, Philo the Epic Poet, Aristoboulus, and Artapanus. While we cannot at this moment go into defining each of these individual categories, what this group of texts shows is an engagement with Jewish traditions in the Greek language in a variety of genres of prose and poetry. The start of this literary engagement is generally located in the early third century BCE.⁴³ We cannot exclude the possibility that Jews may have already been using Greek prior to this, but we do not have evidence for it. Salt-tax papyri from the mid-third century BCE record Jewish names as Hellenes, indicating that Jews were learning Greek, at least in Egypt.⁴⁴ The earliest papyrological evidence we have for Jews writing literature in Greek consists of second century BCE papyri of the Septuagint Pentateuch and is found in both Egypt and Palestine (P. Ryl 458 and 4Q122, respectively). For the fragmentary Jewish-Greek authors specifically, we can only be relatively certain of a *terminus ante quem* of the first century BCE. This date is based on the fact that these fragments have been transmitted as citations by Christian writers which in turn go back to the work of Alexander Polyhistor, a (pagan) historian dated to the first century BCE, who quoted extensively from Jewish-Greek authors in a now-lost work entitled *On the Jews*.⁴⁵

Keeping these caveats regarding the delineation of a Hellenistic Jewish-Greek literary corpus in mind, the evidence attests to the fact that Jews in the Hellenistic period established a literary output in Greek alongside Hebrew and Aramaic in a variety of modes and genres. (Certain) Jews, in any case, had no problem using the Greek language and literary forms. Judaism in the Late Second Temple period is multilingual. The most straightforward evidence for Jewish multilingualism in the Hellenistic era is the fact that the Dead Sea scrolls contain texts in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The presence of Greek in both documentary

42 These fragmentary texts attest to an intricate knowledge of a variety of Jewish traditions, including scriptural and extra-scriptural material, which has given rise to the reasonable assumption that their authors were Jewish.

43 This date is based on the assumption that the Septuagint Pentateuch would have been the first Jewish work in Greek and that the *Letter of Aristeas* was historical in dating its translation to the third century BCE. See Dhont, *Style and Context*, 70.

44 See Willy Clarysse and Dorothy J. Thompson, *Counting the People in Hellenistic Egypt* (2 vols; Cambridge Classical Studies; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), ii:147–48. On the linguistic situation of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt, see Tcherikover, “Prolegomena,” 25–47 (on education, see specifically 37–41).

45 In other words, the evidence for Jewish authors writing in Greek that we have at our disposal is merely not only fragmentary in that individual works are incomplete, but as a corpus it is also only a fragment of what may have existed, and for the most part only what was deemed valuable by authors of a later date and associated with other traditions.

and literary documents at Qumran has been undervalued.⁴⁶ Particularly interesting in the framework of the present study is 4Q127, which seems to represent the genre of “rewritten scripture” in Greek⁴⁷ and may provide an interesting parallel for our historiographers, whose work is often linked to this genre, too.⁴⁸ The scrolls indicate that the activity of Eupolemus and Demetrius is at home in a Jewish environment without a need for the assumption that their work is directed outwards.⁴⁹ Jews used Greek to expand their own literary traditions.

The above linguistic analysis, on the basis of contemporary comparative material, has shown that the Greek of Eupolemus and Demetrius is not in any way clumsy. Their language is paralleled closely in papyri and thus reflects standard post-classical Greek. This indicates that Eupolemus and Demetrius had participated in the Greek-language education system to a meaningful extent. That they did not write in the high register of literary Greek associated with a historian such as Polybius may, in this view, not necessarily be evidence for a limited level of education, but reflective of their position as authors for whom it was acceptable to write in this style and register of Greek. The literary output of the Hellenistic era was large, yet only part of it has been preserved—usually what is assumed to have been the best works, often by canonical authors such as Polybius or Apollonius of Rhodes.⁵⁰ We do not have access to the full range of Greek literary production from the Hellenistic era. We may add to this that the literary basis for their works was the Greek translation of various biblical books, including Genesis and Exodus for Demetrius and Deuteronomy, 1 Kings, and 1–2 Chronicles for Eupolemus.⁵¹ The language of these texts, too, is paralleled for the most part in contemporary papyri.⁵² All of this shows that Greek-speaking Jews use the same style and register as their non-Jewish contemporaries. As much as Eupolemus and Demetrius are insiders in the Jewish tradition, they are also insiders within the Greek-speaking world.

Conclusion

In past scholarship, Demetrius’s and Eupolemus’s position in the Hellenistic world and in Jewish society has been extrapolated from their supposed (lack of) linguistic skill. This

46 Matthew Richey, “The Use of Greek at Qumran: Manuscript and Epigraphic Evidence for a Marginalized Language,” *DSD* 19 (2012): 177–97.

47 Eugene Ulrich, “A Greek Paraphrase of Exodus on papyrus from Qumran Cave 4,” in *Studien zur Septuaginta: Robert Hanhart zu Ehren* (ed. Detlef Fraenkel et al.; MSU 20; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 287–294.

48 E.g., Holladay, *Historians*, 96; Sterling, *Historiography*, 218.

49 Tcherikover, “Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered,” 169–193.

50 Stanley Burnstein, “Greek Identity in the Hellenistic Period,” in: *Hellenisms: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity* (ed. Katerina Zacharia; Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008), 59–78, esp. 62; Alan E. Samuel, *From Athens to Alexandria: Hellenism and Social Goals in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Studia Hellenistica 26; Leuven: n.n., 1983), 67.

51 See Hanson, “Demetrius,” 841 and Fallon, “Eupolemus,” 862.

52 Research on the style and register of the Septuagint has focused on the Pentateuchal books, see note 13 above.

negative evaluation, in turn, has been dominated by scholarly assumptions regarding “standard” Greek style as well as the conceptualization of the relationship between Hellenism and Judaism as monolithic cultural constructs. However, a reassessment of the historiographers’ language usage in the context of post-classical Greek has led to the conclusion that they were, in fact, proficient Greek writers. Though we may not be able to determine with certainty what level of education each author would have attained, the subtleties of their language usage indicate a significant familiarity with Greek. That they wrote in a standard register of the Greek language, is because it was acceptable to them and to their audience. Of all fragmentary Jewish-Greek authors, Eupolemus and Demetrius have by far been evaluated most negatively as Greek writers. That even their language is representative of standard Greek, suggests that the same may hold true for the style of other Jewish-Greek authors, too. These writings need to be contextualized within a broader movement in Second Temple Judaism which uses Greek as a means to develop their own cultural traditions. This broader movement is thus one of positive engagement with aspects of Hellenism.⁵³ Hellenism can, in this view, be most adequately described as a toolbox used to construct the Jews’ own evolving identity in a new societal environment of cultural interaction. At the most basic level, this tool is the Greek language.⁵⁴

Jews writing in Greek represent a peculiar example of hybridity. Their output is inherently located on the crossroads of two literary systems: that of Jewish literature in the Hellenistic period which has a tradition in Semitic languages and for which Greek is the novel language of literary productivity, as well as that of Hellenistic literature which has a rich tradition going back centuries and which became a mode of expression for Judaism. After all, Hellenophone Jews are part of the cultural diversity that characterises Hellenism. As much as Jewish literature attests to the development of a Jewish tradition in Greek, it also attests to the different ways in which Hellenistic Greek literature could be shaped to fit specific contexts. Jewish literature in Greek reflects Jewish engagement with the Greek world as an expansion of the Jewish literary tradition across languages.

⁵³ The complexity of this topic necessitates a book-length study. I am currently preparing a monograph on Greek-speaking Judaism.

⁵⁴ Johnson, “Hellenism and its Discontents,” 438-440.